

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T STATE 305627 TOSEC 250111

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 10090 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 31 DEC

QTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 10090

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: FPR JO SY EG XF UNSC UR

SUBJECT: TALK WITH PM RIFAI-SOVIET VISIT AND NEXT STEPS AT UNSC

BEGIN SUMMARY: RIFAI REPORTS THAT SOVIETS SEEMED AT SEA
ABOUT SYRIAN POSITION AT UPCOMING UNSC AND URGED
JORDANIANS TO PUSH SYRIANS TOWARD MODERATE POSITION.
RIFAI SAYS SOVIET POSITION SEEMS CLOSE TO
US, BUT THEY INSIST ON ENDORSEMENT BY UNSC OF THREE
PRINCIPLES--TOTAL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL, PALESTINIAN
RIGHTS, AND FULL COMMITMENT TO PEACE BY ALL STATES IN

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THE AREA. RIFAI NOW PLANS TO TRY TO SEE ASAD THIS

COMING WEEKEND AND WORK OUT TEXT. HE HOPED THAT TEXT WILL BE MODERATE BUT AT MINIMUM WILL INVOLVE SOME STATEMENT OF ABOVE THREE PRINCIPLES. HE URGED US TO GO ALONG WITH SUCH A TEXT. AFTER SEEING SYRIANS HE HOPES TO COORDINATE TEXT WITH EGYPT. END SUMMARY.

1.ON DECEMBER 31 I ASKED RIFAI FOR A REPORT ON JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO MOSCOW WHICH HAD JUST RETURNED TO AMMAN. RIFAI SAID THAT ALMOST ALL OF THE EXCHANGES, AND MOST OF WHAT THE SOVIETS HAD TO SAY HAD BEEN ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES. BUT HE ADDED THERE HAD BEEN ONE INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT. THE SOVIETS HAD ASKED THE JORDANIANS "WHAT IS THE SYRIAN POSITION"? AND THEN URGED THE JORDANIANS TO BE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON THE SYRIANS IN THE PREPARATION OF ANY RESOLUTION TEXT.

2. RIFAI EXPLAINED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BEING VERY MODERATE AND IN THIS RESPECT WERE VERY CLOSE TO THE US POSITION. THEY TOLD THE JORDANAINS THAT THEY WANTED AN CONSTRUCTIVE SESSION AND HOPED THAT THAT ARABS WOULD BE MODERATE BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE BOUND TO SUPPORT WHATEVER ARAB POSITION WAS ARRIVED AT. IN SPECIFIC TERMS THE SOVIETS WANTED TO SEE ACCEPTANCE IN ANY RESOLUTION OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL OF THREE PRINCIPLES: (A) COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY OCCUPIED IN 1967 (B) ACCEPTANCE OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS. AND (C) A COMMITMENT TO PEACE BY ALL THE STATES IN THE AREA.

3.IN VIEW OF THE SOVIET POSITION RIFAI SAID HE PLANS NOW TO VISIT ASAD IN DAMASCUS TAKING WITH HIM THE DELEGATION THAT WENT TO MOSCOW AND IN PARTICULAR HIS UNCLE, SENATOR ABDUL MONEM RIFAI AND JORDANA'S HAMID SHARAF. THIS WILL AVOID BOTH HAVING TO WAIT IN AMMAN FOR KHADDAM TO COME HERE AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED TO THE EMBARRASMENT TO KHADDAM OF HAVING TO GO OVER HIS HEAD TO ASAD IS KHADDAM IS UNREASONBLY TOUGH ON THE RESOLUTION AS HE PREDICTABLY MIGHT BE. FINALLY RIFAI SAYS THE TACTIC WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE "CURE OF THE ARABS" EXCESSIVE HOSPITALITY

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"I CAN ALWAYS GET MORE FROM ASAD IN DAMASCUS THAN I CAN HERE IN AMMAN."

4. RIFAI SAYS HE PROBABLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GO TO DAMASCUS UNTIL SUNDAY JANUARY 4. HE WOULD COME BACK IMMEDIATELY AND LEAVE THE MOSCOW DELEGATION TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS OF THE LANGUAGE WITH SYRAINS RETURNING TO AMMAN PROBABLY ON THE SIXTH.

5. ON SUBSTANCE RIFAI SAID HE WILL WORK FOR MODERATE RESOLUTION BUT THE BEST HE COULD COME UP WITH WILL HAVE TO IN SOME WAY ENDORSE THE THREE PRINCIPLES NOTED ABOVE. HE SAYS THE SOVIETS WANT TO AVOID A US VETO AND SEE THE UNCS AS A HELPFUL PRECEDENT FOR AND STEP TOWARD GENEVA. HE HOPED THE US WILL GO ALONG WITH THIS KIND OF RESOLUTION. SO THERE WOULD BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING I REPEATED FOR HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD OF OUR POSITION WHEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON WAS HERE AND THAT I HAD REPEATED IT FOR HIM AGAIN TWO DAYS AGO. I HAD NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS AND WAS NOT EMPOWERED TO NEGOTIATE WITH HIM ON TEXT. WHAT HE SUGGESTED WAS CLEARLY NOT WHAT HE HAD TOLD HIM OUR POSITION WAS HE REAFFIRMED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THIS BUT STILL HOPED THAT THE DISCUSSIONS IN NEW YORK MIGHT BE ABLE TO WORK OUT SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE.

6. AFTER COORDINATION WITH SYRIAN RIFAI SAID NEXT STEP WOULD BE SEND A DELEGATION TO CAIRO. KING WILL SHORTLY BE SENDING A PERSONAL LETTER TO SADAT SUGGESTING THAT IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO ARRIVE AT A JOINT JORDANIAN SYRIAN POSITION JORDAN WILL BRING THAT POSITION TO CAIRO IN AN EFFORT TO WORK OUT A TRIPARTITE APPROACH. THE STRESS WILL BE ON ACHIEVING SOME UNITY AND RIFAI SAYS INCIDENTALLY THAT IF THIS CAN BE DONE, IT MAY WELL HELP TO FURTHER SOFTEN THE CRITICISMS AND RECRIMINATIONS OVER SINAI II OR IF NOT I MIGHT MAKE SUCH ACTIVITIES ON THE PART OF EGYPT AND SYRIA MORE DIFFICULT.

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7. RIFAI SAYS HE IS NOT SURE OF SADAT'S ATTITUDE "SADAT IS MAD AT US. HE MAY WANT TO DELAY A WHILE. BUT IF WE CAN PERSUADE HIM WE WILL TRY TO SEND A DELEGATION ON JANUARY 7 OR 8 TO DO THE FINAL COORDINATING WITH EGYPT".

8. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT PASS CAIRO AND DAMASCUS PICKERING UNQTE ROBINSON

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